





# Slide 1 – Mount Mitchell – 1916

**“It all started with a train....and people who care.”**

- Mount Mitchell State Park
- Citizens of NC deserve credit for creating our first state park. Mount Mitchell was also the first in the Southeast in 1916.
- Highest point in the eastern U.S. 6,684 feet, it has a unique alpine forest that we only find above 5,500 feet. Main trees are Red Spruce and Frazier Fir. If you haven't hiked atop Mount Mitchell, imagine holding your face right up to a fragrant Christmas tree. The summit gets 100+ inches of snow each year; the average high temperature in July is only 66 degrees.
- We like to call it 'Canada Down South' because there are plants & animals that resemble what you'd find in Maine and Canada, like the Northern flying squirrel, red crossbill and the Northern saw-whet owl.
- The mountain was being logged aggressively by 1911. Red spruce was valued for pianos and guitars. WW1 increased the need for spruce as the premier wood for airplanes. A narrow gauge logging railroad was built in 1911 and expanded to Camp Alice by 1914.
- At its busiest, the Perley and Crockett Lumber Company had 6 locomotives, 70 logging flat cars, 2 loaders, 2 steam skidders, 30 teams of horses and 200 men working at camps on the mountain.
- By 1914 the logging company began bringing passengers up to the base of the summit for extra money. The 21-mile ride up from Black Mountain to Camp Alice took 4 hours. There were nine switchbacks so you almost always had black smoke billowing in your face. From the tents and mess hall at Camp Alice it was an hour hike to the summit. A visit to the mountain was an all-day affair.
- Interestingly, the railroad that was originally built for logging also helped get thousands of people up the mountain to see both its beauty and its destruction. North Carolina citizens took action.



# Slide 2 – Mount Mitchell – 1916

## “The legacy begins”

- Citizens wrote letters, wrote articles in the local newspapers and got the ears of their politicians. In 1915 Governor Locke Craig signed law authorizing the purchase of ~ 524 acres around the summit.
- *“We cannot expect them (the lumbermen) to sacrifice their business for the public good. They have bought that timber. They are entitled to every stick of it. If the people of North Carolina want to save it, they must do so themselves.”* Governor Craig in a speech to the Society of American Foresters, January 1915. He is affirming that preserving Mount Mitchell was at the will of NC citizens.
- *“The forest has been mowed down by the lumberman. But for the purchase by the State, the whole of Mount Mitchell would be a barren waste. Now, as far as this majestic mountain... the dark green of its summit is discernible above the ruin.”* – Governor Locke Craig in 1915
- *“whereas, it is deemed desirable that this beautiful and elevated spot shall be acquired and permanently dedicated as a State park for the use of the people of the entire State seeking health and recreation.”* Chapter 76 of the Public Laws of 1915, ratified March 3, 1915 by the N.C. General Assembly and signed by Governor Craig
- *“Above the Clouds ...with Grandeur, Beauty, and Sublimity, Unequaled on the Globe”, “an education trip pronounced by all who have taken it to be a scenic marvel of mountain magnificence”. Quotes from ~1916 advertising pamphlets by Sandford H. Cohen, famed tourism booster and General Passenger Agent. (10,000 tourists traveled the railroad to the new state park between May 1916 & October 1916).*
- *“Why not drop for a time your business burdens”, “run away to this ‘bit of Paradise,’ pitch your tent there – and live!”, “bodily vigor and mental alertness that the centers of civilization know not of.” “you will learn to rise with the lark and go to bed early – as you should. Insomnia...will vanish...You will gain the appetite of your childhood days...you will again become an optimist, and the world will look to you as it did in the days of your adolescence”. Text from Southern Railway Company pamphlets advertising the trip to the top of Mount Mitchell. “*
- Other Information
- Sandford H. Cohen, the promoter of the railroad, later became the promoter of the first motor road to the summit. The toll road (~\$1) was one-way; you could ascend between 8:30 am and 1 pm, and descend from 3:00 – 5:30 pm. It followed the same path of the railroad and opened in 1922. His catch phrase was, *“Making the Apex of Appalachia Accessible”*.
- Passenger railroad continued to operate until 1919. Toll motor roads operated 1922 until 1939 when the Blue Ridge Parkway opened and it became assessable for free.
- **So our State Park legacy begins...**





# Slide 3 – Civilian Conservation Corps

## “Building on our legacy”

- **Civilian Conservation Corps**
- We owe a lot of our park roads, trails, picnic shelters and buildings to the hard work of the **Civilian Conservation Corps**, aka Roosevelt’s Tree Army, 80 years ago. Parks helped by the CCC include Fort Macon, William B. Umstead, Singletary Lake, Morrow Mountain, Mount Mitchell and Hanging Rock. The CCC also worked on the Blue Ridge Parkway and Smokey Mountain National Park. In fact, every state in the country plus Alaska and Hawaii (which were not yet states) benefited from the hard work and sweat of the CCC.
- Civilian Conservation Corps began in **1933**. It was the 1<sup>st</sup> Federal employment program of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal to help the country come out of the Great Depression. Unemployment was around 25%, and most young men had never had a fulltime job.
- How motivated was our country? The legislation to establish the CCC was passed by congress and signed by the president less than 1-month after he took office. That summer, 250,000 young unemployed men (between ages 18-23, later extended to 17-28) from families in need began work. They were paid room & board plus \$30 per month, \$25 of which had to be sent home to their families. They were given a place to sleep, opportunities to take classes in the evening, and three good meals per day. In Western NC camps, the men gained an average of 15 pounds during their first two months at camp, demonstrating that they were likely poor and malnourished when they arrived.
- **Impacts** left by CCC in state parks: Lake Lodge at Hanging Rock, planted 10,000 trees and shrubs at William B. Umstead, built the road leading into Fort Macon and cleared an overgrown forest from within the fort, built the lodge and road at Morrow Mountain.
- From the poverty and hardship of the Great Depression came an **investment in our future** that will last into the foreseeable forever.
- **Quotes**
- "I propose to create a Civilian Conservation Corps to be used in simple work, more important, however, than the material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work." – FDR
- “The fundamental idea behind parks... is that the country belongs to the people... for the enrichment of the lives of all of us.” – FDR
- **Other Information**
- At least 66 CCC camps operated in NC, 11 of them were African American CCC camps.
- Average camp size was 200 men.
- **The Legacy is building...**





## Slide 4 – Civil Rights Era

### “Enjoying the legacy”

- Starting in the 1940's several of our state parks were **segregated** with different swim areas, bathrooms and even recreation activities like boating.
- Umstead State Park, Jones Lake and many other park areas had different “sides” or completely different parks.
- In the 1950's the **civil rights movements** started and in 1960 the Greensboro “sit-in” brought national attention.
- State Parks are here for everyone, and they **LOVE** them.
- In 2015 more than 17 million people enjoyed North Carolina State Parks. That number will only keep growing as we all continue to **enjoy the legacy** of State Parks.







# Slide 5 – Land and Water Conservation Fund

## “Growth of a legacy”

- The **Land and Water Conservation fund**, a federal program was greatest advance in conservation and outdoor recreation since the New Deal. In a short 9 years during the 60's and 70's, North Carolina created **14 parks** in some spectacular places.
- Pilot Mountain, Stone Mountain, Carolina Beach, Raven Rock, Medoc Mountain, Crowders Mountain, Dismal Swamp, Goose Creek
- To the native Saura Indians, the earliest known inhabitants of the region, Pilot Mountain was known **as Jomeokee, the "Great Guide" or "Pilot."** It guided both Native Americans and early European hunters along a north-south path through the area.
- The mountain still guides us today through the **growth of our legacy.**







# Slide 6 – Jockey’s Ridge

## “Standing up for our legacy”

### Standing up to a bulldozer...for sand...”

- Jockey’s Ridge. The highest sand dunes in the eastern U.S. Best sunsets around, you see the Atlantic Ocean, the sound, the Bodie Island Lighthouse. You can see pine forests actively being swallowed by moving dunes.
- In Summer 1973. Three children were playing in the dunes when they saw bulldozers moving sand and ran home to tell their mother. Carolista Baum heard this, ran across the street and physically put herself in front of the lead bulldozer and stood there till the operator turned it off.
- With determination, Baum led a group that became the People to Preserve Jockey’s Ridge. They quickly gathered 50,000 petition signatures. She drove to Raleigh almost every day for three weeks straight, speaking with every legislator she could. She persuaded songwriters to sing about Jockey’s Ridge and invited filmmakers to the dunes. The group sold “SOS” — “Save Our Sand Dune” — T-shirts and bumper stickers, plus \$5 certificates to “own” a square foot of Jockey’s Ridge. On the side of the visitor center, you can still see a hand-painted wooded sign that reads “Buy a Piece of the Ridge. For a \$5 donation you can be an honorary owner of a square foot of Jockey’s Ridge. For today! For tomorrow! Forever!”
- Carolista Baum has become a legend and everyone has a story about her. In her work as a jewelry maker, it is reported that she severely cut her right hand and quickly learned to write with her left so she could continue writing thousands of letters to save the dunes. And her daughter caught pneumonia, she move the phone by the bedside so she could continue making phone calls to save the dunes.
- Within 2 years they were successful in getting the state to open Jockey’s Ridge State park – which in is one of our most visited drawing 1.5 million people a year.
- **Quotes** *"We talked to the children about standing up for their convictions, but if parents don't respond, they certainly can't expect their children to. We had to do something, and we did!"*
- **People begin standing up for our legacy...**





# Slide 7 – Eno River

## “Fighting for our legacy”

- In the late sixties and early seventies, the wild, picturesque, and historic Eno River was **threatened**: the city of Durham planned to **dam the river** and create a new reservoir for its growing population. The Eno had already been used as a water supply for the city once before at the turn of the century. The City Council now viewed damming the river as not only possible but also inevitable.
- Concerned about the city's plans, an informal “walking ” group of local citizens came together to **raise awareness** and **stop the project** from happening. On October 14, 1966, they formed the Association for the Preservation of the Eno River Valley, Inc. In addition to lobbying the city to find other solutions for its water needs, the Association contacted the Regional Triangle Planning Commission, City Council members, and local newspapers. They scheduled hikes, canoe trips, and slide shows, created river maps, researched mill histories, and conducted wildlife inventories. Public outreach accompanied political action to put the Eno in the public eye. The first hike the Association sponsored brought out 75 people. The next hike brought out 450. A **new model for river conservation** (and one that would be replicated across North Carolina and beyond) was being created.
- In 1972, the Association formed an alliance with the Nature Conservancy and presented to the North Carolina Board of Conservation and Development their case for preserving the river. As a result, the Board of the Nature Conservancy and its State Parks Committee endorsed acquiring property along the Eno River for a state park. Soon thereafter, Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Bernheim donated the first 90 acres. Association secretary Margaret Nygard said the donation “set up a territorial area for the park,” adding that **“...It was more than words – it made it real.”** One year later on June 15, 1973, after a cooperative effort between the city of Durham, Orange County, the State of North Carolina, the Nature Conservancy and the Eno River Association, Governor James Holshouser welcomed the Eno River State Park into the NC State Parks system.
- Since then, through additional fundraising and land acquisition, the Eno River Association has helped Eno River State Park grow to well over 4,000 acres. In addition, we have helped create other riverfront parks in Durham and Orange counties. Used by over a half million people annually, they include West Point on the Eno City Park, Old Farm Park, Penny's Bend, Little River Regional Park and the Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area. Now protected for much of its thirty-five miles, the **Eno flows on.**
- However, there are still 2,000 acres still to be acquired for Eno River State Park and miles of riverfront still vulnerable to development. The river also continues to face serious threats. In addition to a series of fish kills, we have battled two major highway construction projects, a city landfill, two sewer systems, and an asphalt plant. The Eno River Association has continued to be a first line of defense, standing up and speaking out to successfully halt these projects. **Hydrilla** is the most recent threat to this unique system.
- Citizens keep **fighting for our legacy...**







# Slide 8 – CACR

## “Continuing the legacy”

- **James Stillman Rockefeller’s** conservation interests were clear in his use and care for Long Valley Farm. He loved climbing his favorite longleaf pine tree. He swam in the millpond well into his 90’s!
- When he learned of plans for a highway to cut through the property, Mr. Rockefeller worked to place Long Valley Farm on the **National Register of Historic Places**. This prevented the highway's construction, preserving the natural and cultural history of the farm.
- Before passing away in 2004, Mr. Rockefeller ensured this treasured place would be preserved for generations by willing the land to The Nature Conservancy. They further restored its natural ecology by planting longleaf pine and native grasses. The Nature Conservancy **donated** the farm to the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation.
- The Rockefeller’s have perhaps done more to protect parks than any single American family. James Stillman Rockefeller’s second cousin, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., is renowned for his donations towards creating Grand Teton, Acadia, and the Great Smokey Mountains National Parks. In dedicating Long Valley Farm to conservation, James Stillman added yet another magnificent park to the Rockefeller family **conservation legacy**.
- The park was the most recent addition to the NC State Parks, opening in 2013. Fantastic fields, forests and millpond to be protected forever. It had more than 50 old farm buildings... there is a lot of work to do in building new trails, new campground restoring some building, removing some others that may not be safe.
- Our system continues to grow and strive to meet the needs and wishes of 15 million visitors per year.
- Parks, as much as any place or thing, reach all people... from all ages, ability levels, interests, financial background, race, etc.
- **We all own these 41 state parks** and other natural areas. Just like it was up to people of North Carolina to protect Mount Mitchell, it is ultimately up to the people of North Carolina to protect these amazing natural wonders and maintain the trails and buildings needed to enjoy them. Thank you for visiting, and please come back and tell your friends and family.
- **The legacy continues....with YOU**



## Slide 9 – YOU...“Our legacy”

- Hold up a Mirror.
- Or take out a camera and take pictures of the audience.
- Or smart phone selfie view?

The Legacy is you...it's all of us...our legacy

It all started with a train and some people who care. It has grown and will continue.....what will your part of that legacy be...?

# The legacy of North Carolina State Parks



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